

Vatican: Pope Francis' first encyclical might be out this year

Carol Glatz Catholic News Service | Apr. 25, 2013
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Pope Francis may publish his first encyclical this year, the Vatican spokesman said.

Jesuit Fr. Federico Lombardi said he "would not exclude" the possibility of the publication of the pope's first encyclical "within this year," Vatican Radio reported.

The spokesman told reporters Thursday that retired Pope Benedict XVI had already "fleshed out material on the theme of faith" for an encyclical.

Vatican officials had said Pope Benedict completed work in late 2012 on what would have been his fourth encyclical -- a letter on the theological virtue of faith. Its release was expected in the first half of 2013, but the pope resigned Feb. 28 before its publication.

It is not unusual for a pope to pick up work begun by his predecessor, make changes and publish it in his own name. The second part of Pope Benedict's first encyclical, *Deus Caritas Est* ("God is Love"), was a discussion of Catholic charitable activity prepared under Blessed John Paul II. Nine months after Pope Benedict was elected, the document was released after the new pope reworked that section.

Lombardi also said that Pope Benedict, who has been living at the papal summer residence in Castel Gandolfo since his retirement, would soon be moving -- as expected -- to a renovated building in the Vatican Gardens.

The retired pope should be moving to the Mater Ecclesiae Monastery between the end of April and early May, the spokesman said.

In the meantime, he said Pope Francis will continue to reside in the Vatican guesthouse where he has been staying since the beginning of the conclave that elected him, instead of the papal apartment in the apostolic palace.

The Domus Sanctae Marthae houses permanent residents as well as some guests who come to the Vatican for meetings.

Pope Francis "likes it there very much," the spokesman said, and, at the moment, it doesn't seem he wants to change his accommodations, even though no "final decision" has been made.

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